

Message Text

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61

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGR-20 SP-03 AID-20 EB-11 NSC-07 RSC-01

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R 261315Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2929

INFO AMEMBASSY JICCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

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AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONETL MADRAS

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PASS AGRICULTURE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, IN

SUBJ: INDIAN FOODGRAIN SITUATION

REFS: A. NEW DELHI 9744 B. NEW DELHI 9683

BEGIN SUMMARY: MONSOON'S PERFORMANCE CONTINUES TO BE BELOW NORMAL.

INCREASING CONCERN IS BEING EXPRESSED ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR THIS

FALL'S FOODGRAIN, COTTON, AND PEANUT CROPS. BELOW AVERAGE PRE-

CIPITATION HAS AFFECTED WATER LEVELS IN MOST OF THE MAJOR

RESERVOIRS THUS AFFECTING THE GENERATION OF HYDRO-ELECTRICITY AND

THE AVAILABILITY OF WATER FOR IRRIGATION. ACCORDING TO AN OFFICIAL

STATEMENT, GOI HAS, IN RECENT MONTHS, BOUGHT COMMERCIALY

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1,270,000 TONS OF WHEAT AND 400,000 TONS OF MILO FROM ABROAD.

ADDITIONAL PURCHASES ARE EXPECTED. END SUMMARY.

1. THERE WAS SOME REDUCTION IN MONSOON ACTIVITY DURING THE WEEK ENDING JULY 24. THE NUMBER OF WEATHER ZONES RECEIVING NORMAL OR ABOVE NORMAL RAINFALL DECLINED TO 10 FROM 14 (OUT OF A TOTAL OF 35) IN THE PREVIOUS WEEK. NORMAL OR ABOVE NORMAL PRECIPITATION DURING THE WEEK WAS CONFINED TO RAJASTHAN, JAMMU & KASHMIR, AND HIMACHAL PRADESH IN NORTHERN AND NORTHWESTERN INDIA, NORTHERN BIHAR, GANGETIC (SOUTHERN) WEST BENGAL, AND ASSAM AND MEGHALAYA IN NORTHEASTERN INDIA AND TAMIL NADU AND KERALA AT THE SOUTHERN TIP OF INDIA.

2. THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE MONSOON DURING THE CURRENT SEASON CONTINUES TO BE BELOW AVERAGE AND SUBSTANTIALLY BELOW ITS 1973 PERFORMANCE DURING THE SAME TIME PERIOD. CUMULATIVE RAINFALL FROM JUNE 1 TO JULY 24, 1974, WAS NORMAL OR ABOVE NORMAL IN ONLY 14 WEATHER ZONES, COMPARED TO 25 WEATHER ZONES WHICH WERE IN THE NORMAL OR ABOVE NORMAL RAINFALL CATEGORIES DURING THE SAME PERIOD IN 1973. RAINFALL HAS BEEN ESPECIALLY DEFICIENT IN UTTER PRADESH, SOUTHERN BIHAR, ORISSA, SOUTHWESTERN ANDHRA PRADESH, SOUTHEASTERN KARNATAKA, EASTERN MAHARASHTRA AND GUJARAT.

3. THE CONTINUATION OF THE ERRATIC BEHAVIOR OF THE MONSOON AND BELOW NORMAL PRECIPITATION IN MANY PARTS OF THE COUNTRY IS CAUSING GROWING CONCERN AMONG GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND FARMERS ABOUT THE PROSPECTS OF THIS YEAR'S FOODGRAIN AND OTHER Kharif CROPS. IN SOME AREAS, REPLANTING OF CROPS MAY BECOME NECESSARY IF THE MONSOON'S PERFORMANCE DOES NOT QUICKLY IMPROVE. PRODUCTION PROSPECTS FOR THE Kharif FOODGRAINS, COTTON, AND PEANUT CROPS WILL INCREASINGLY DIMINISH WITH EACH SUCCEEDING WEEK OF BELOW NORMAL MONSOON PERFORMANCE IN THE MAIN PRODUCING AREAS.

4. THE PERFORMANCE OF THE MONSOON HAS ALSO HAD AN EFFECT ON THE AMOUNT OF WATER HELD IN RESERVOIRS FOR USE IN IRRIGATION AND THE GENERATION OF HYDRO-ELECTRICITY WITH A BELOW NORMAL MONSOON INCREASING THE DEMAND FOR BOTH. IN NORTH INDIA, WATER STORAGE IN THE GOBINDSAGAR LAKE OF THE BHAKRA DAM CONTINUES TO BE AT A VERY LOW LEVEL BECAUSE OF INADEQUATE RAINFALL IN THE CATCHMENT AREAS. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONSEQUENTLY, THE HYDRO-POWER GENERATION AT BHAKRA CONTINUES TO BE RESTRICTED. EFFECTIVE JULY 22 THE GOI CLOSED THE NANGAL FERTILIZER FACTORY, A MAJOR CONSUMER OF THE POWER GENERATED AT BHAKRA, FOR A PERIOD OF TEN DAYS OR POSSIBLY LONGER. THIS ACTION WAS TAKEN TO ENABLE THE PUNJAB AND HARYANA STATE GOVERNMENTS TO SUPPLY MORE POWER TO CULTIVATORS FOR OPERATING THEIR TUBEWELLS.

5. EFFECTIVE JULY 25, THE UTTAR PRADESH GOVERNMENT AUTHORIZED A SIX-HOUR POWER SUPPLY DURING DAYTIME FOR OPERATION OF GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE TUBEWELLS. THE DAY-TIME SUPPLY OF POWER TO TUBEWELLS HAS BEEN MADE POSSIBLE BY ORDERING CERTAIN TYPES OF INDUSTRIES IN BIGGER TOWNS TO STOP THEIR OPERATIONS DURING DAYTIME AND TO WORK ONLY DURING NIGHT.

6. CONGEN MADRAS REPORTS THAT WATER FROM THE METTUR DAM WAS RELEASED ON JULY 20 FOR IRRIGATION IN THE THANJAVUR, TIRUCH-IRAPPALI AND SOUTH ARCOT DISTRICTS OF TAMIL NADU. WATER LEVEL AT METTUR DAM ON JULY 21 STOOD AT 64.3 FEET, COMPARED TO 111.10 FEET ON SAME DATE LAST YEAR AND THE DAM'S FULL LEVEL OF 120.14 FEET.

7. IN PARLIAMENT THIS WEEK, MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, A.P. SHINDE, INDICATED THAT SO FAR 1,270,000 TONS OF WHEAT AND 400,000 TONS OF MILO HAVE BEEN PURCHASED FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES. HE COULD NOT AT PRESENT GIVE THE EXACT QUANTITY OF FOODGRAIN THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSED TO IMPORT TO MEET ITS DOMESTIC SHORTAGE.

8. IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THE ABOVE QUANTITIES REPRESENT INDIA'S PURCHASES SINCE IT RE-ENTERED THE WORLD MARKET IN EARLY APRIL 1974. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD ALL OF THE WHEAT IS FROM THE US AND ALL OF THE MILO IS FROM ARGENTINA. WE EXPECT ADDITIONAL FOODGRAINS TO BE PURCHASED IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

9. MINISTER SHINDE ALSO INDICATED THAT GOVERNMENT STOCKS OF FOOD-GRAINS ON JUNE 1, 1974, TOTALED APPROXIMATELY 3.8 MILLION TONS. THIS COMPARES WITH 4.0 AND 8.2 MILLION TONS HELD ON JUNE 1 OF 1973 AND 1972, RESPECTIVELY. WE EXPECT GOVERNMENT FOODGRAIN

SUPPLIES TO REMAIN VERY TIGHT THROUGH THE SUMMER MONTHS.

MOYNIHAN

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